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15-17 East 40th Street
REGINALD TOWNSEND, Secretary,
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JOHNSON ART APPRAISEMENT

In a brief editorial in our issue of October 20 last, we commented upon the then recently announced appraisal at \$4,500,000 of the art possessions of the late John G. Johnson, of Philadelphia, said appraisal having been made by Prof. Goodyear, of the Brooklyn Museum, and Mr. Thomas E. Kirby, of the American Art Association, and who were assisted in the valuation of the pictures by M. Francois Kleinberger; and stated that "it was doubtful whether, notwithstanding the artistic quality and interest of the pictures, they would bring the market value in this country, at least, that would examples of the better known Old Masters.

While this editorial comment and argument, which were based upon a despatch from Philadelphia, were in no manner intended to reflect upon the knowledge, good judgment and qualifications of the well known appraisers, it appears that this comment and argument were unjust, in that the final and large appraisal figures covered all of Mr. Johnson's collections, and not as our Philadelphia correspondent and we, in turn, from his erroneous impression, assumed, the pictures alone.

The late renowned and able collector and connoisseur was a lover of antiques, porcelains, old furniture and ancient weaves as well as pictures; his old tapestries, rugs and furniture (notably his Chippendale pieces) are very valuable, and such values entered largely into the appraisal of his art treasures. We are most unwilling to even appear unjust to anyone and are only too pleased to correct any unfair impression that we may have, even innocently, given our readers.

Tonetti's Commemorative Tablet

A commemorative tablet, dedicated to the memory, and bearing the names of American volunteers killed in battle before our entry into the war, has been designed by F. M. L. Tonetti and will be exhibited for the first time and sold in reproduction at the booth of the Appui aux Artistes at Hero Land.

"EIGHT UNIMPORTANT ARTISTS"

"Eight unimportant artists," said Mr. Henry MacBride, art critic of the N. Y. "Sun," at the head of his art page in that journal, Sunday last, Nov. 18, "met last Monday, as the Council of the National Academy of Design, and put another smudge upon the history of that institution by adopting resolutions against the Barnard 'Lincoln.'"

After quoting the resolutions in full, published in last week's ART NEWS, he proceeded as follows:

"The eight individuals who concocted the resolution are H. W. Watrous, H. Russell Butler, Charles C. Curran, Francis C. Jones, Elliott Daingerfield, Colin Campbell Cooper, Douglass Volk and E. Irving Couse. Not one of these men has attained sufficient eminence in the art world to make his opinion of importance to the public. But as a committee they have been enabled to write a peculiarly nasty page into the annals of the poor old Academy."

"[It all depends upon one's point of view.] We have been under the impression that the painters above named had for some years enjoyed a respect and esteem in the American art world, which with the art public's general estimate of the merit and ability of their work had placed them in a higher rank than the 'unimportant.' True, they are not believers in or followers of the so-called 'Modernist' cult, whose 'Apostolate of the Art Press' Mr. MacBride heads, but is it not rather unfair to call leaders of a 'cult' or 'movement' opposed to that of which one follows or is a devotee—'unimportant'?"

We are decidedly curious to know which contemporary American painters Mr. MacBride considers as "important," and we trust he will enlighten us, in his sprightly Sunday "Sun" art page. We opine that American artists in general would also like to have this information. "Cards on the table," Mr. MacBride!—Ed.]

BARNARD ANSWERS CRITICS

"There has been some little injustice done to Mr. Barnard's invention," says, editorially, the N. Y. "Times." "Few can see it without recalling a line of a hymn that was a favorite with the Jubilee Singers:

Nobody knows what pain I feel.

"If it's a denotation of physical, and not mental, pain that the statue seems to portray, yet by a remote association of ideas Mr. Lincoln is recalled in one aspect of his achievement. The Jubilee Singers bring to mind emancipation and the Emancipator. This merit should not be forgotten or grudged.

"Mr. Barnard takes, of course, a different view. In this letter to the 'Times' he appears with a grandiosity not unworthy of his genius, of his long solitary thought, and of the form in which he has embodied it for the marvel of the world:

"To Editor New York Times:
"These lines, my only answer, are worthy, I hope, to be placed on your editorial page:

"For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him.

"He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrow, and acquainted with grief; and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not.—Isaiah, liii."

"George Grey Barnard."

"The comparison which Mr. Barnard invites, his 'answer' to the critics, is perhaps as bizarre and singular as they in their blindness to originality find his statue to be. Athanasius against the world was not more loftily confident. Yet he seems to admit that there is no form or comeliness or beauty in his Lincoln. Seldom does the criticized agree so thoroughly with the critics."

Women Painters, and Sculptors, Officers

The annual meeting of the national association of Women Painters and Sculptors was held at the Ritz-Carlton, Nov. 14 last, when Mrs. Henry Mottet was elected to succeed Miss Maud M. Mason as president, who retired after five years of valuable service to the association. Two honorary vice-presidents, Mmes. Helen Foster Barnett and John T. Pratt, were chosen and the other members of the board are: first vice-president, Miss Maud M. Mason; second vice-president, Miss Helen M. Turner; corresponding secretary, Miss Olive P. Black; ass't corr. secretary, Miss Elizabeth Hardenburg; recording secretary, Miss Agnes Pelton; advisory board, Mmes. Henry Lang and Gillette; chairman of fall jury, Miss Velma Steele and chairman of annual jury, Miss Sarah Morris Green.

CORRESPONDENCE

Chicago Art Prizes

Editor AMERICAN ART NEWS,

Dear Sir: In your issue of October 27 in writing of the jury for the Exhibition of American Oil Paintings and Sculpture at the Art Institute your Chicago correspondent tries to create the impression that there have been objections made to the appointment of three of the Chicago jurors, and makes the inquiries, why this and why that selection.

If your correspondent had inquired at the Art Institute he could have learned what the Chicago "Tribune" has published.

The jury was formed as follows:

Paintings—Nominated by the Chicago Society of Artists, two members, Ralph Clarkson and Edgar S. Cameron; nominated by the Arts Club, Frederic C. Bartlett; nominated by the Palette and Chisel Club, Harry L. Engle; nominated to represent the Art Institute, William O. Goodman; nominated by the Art Institute as members at large, Emil Carlsen, New York; Charles Rosen, Pennsylvania; Edmund C. Tarbell, Massachusetts, and James R. Hopkins, Ohio.

The Chicago jurors were selected by their fellow artists, and it is not unreasonable to suppose that they were thought to have some qualifications for the work of selecting and judging the paintings in this exhibition.

It so happens that the work of the "pigressives" for which your correspondent alleges I have no sympathy was hung at my suggestion and under my direction in a gallery apart from other works.

Yours truly,

Edgar S. Cameron.

Chicago, Nov. 19, 1917.

Price of a Gainsborough

Through the dropping out of the form of a final "0" in a story published in the "Christian Science Monitor" of Boston, of the recent sale to the Worcester Museum by Duveen Brothers, of an important example of Gainsborough, namely, the artist's double portrait of his two daughters—and which story was republished in the AMERICAN ART NEWS last week—it was stated that the work, which sold at auction in 1864 for \$588, only brought \$4,200 when last sold in London in 1912.

As this last and erroneously given figure was quoted, in contrast with the sale price of the picture in 1864, as an evidence of the rise in its value in 53 years, readers of the story presumably realized that the final cipher had been omitted or dropped out in the 1912 sale price, quoted as having been only \$4,200. This is exactly what occurred. The picture was bought at a sale at Christie's, London, in 1912, by the Agnews for £8,400, or at the then rate of exchange, approximately \$42,000. This latter figure proves the argument of the story that fine art works always appreciate in value, and it is regrettable that the "Christian Science Monitor" should have made such a blunder.

OBITUARY

Alfred J. Bloor

Alfred J. Bloor, noted as an architect thirty years ago in N. Y., and since his retirement from active practice in 1884, prolific as a writer on architectural subjects, died at Stonington, Conn., Nov. 19, aged 89.

Mr. Bloor studied architecture in N. Y. City and practised his profession there for thirty-one years. In 1884 he gave up active practise to devote himself to the publications of the American Institute of Architects, of which he was a fellow, and to travel. He was a founder and life member of the Metropolitan Museum.

Frank W. Kitching

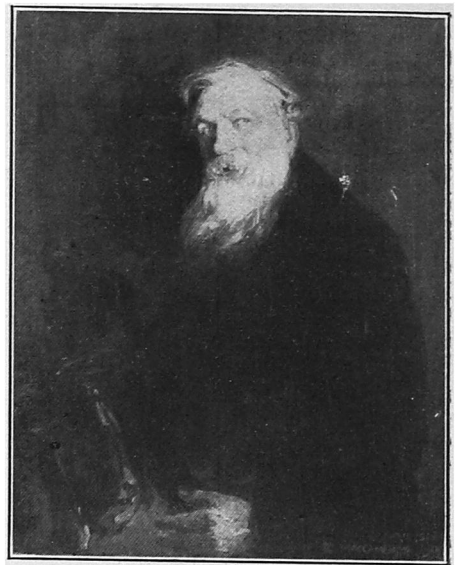
Frank W. Kitching, art patron, Civil War veteran and clubman, died Nov. 16, at his home, 204 W. 110 St., aged 79.

Mr. Kitching was born in Mass. in 1839, came to N. Y. early in life and served through the Civil War. He was one of the best known members of the Lambs Club, and was a member and patron of the N. Y. Zoological Society, the Museum of Natural History, the Metropolitan Museum and many other organizations. He leaves his wife, Mrs. Grace E. Barnes Kitching.

Germans Honor Rodin

German art critics, says an Exchange Telegraph dispatch from Amsterdam, devote enthusiastic articles to Rodin. They generally consider him the greatest sculptor France has produced. One writer says: "Rodin, like Shakespeare and Michelangelo, belongs to us Germans, for our claim upon every art creator is one we will never allow anybody to question."

The Berlin Academy of Fine Arts will discuss at its next meeting the advisability of sending through a neutral country a message of condolence to Rodin's family.



AUGUSTE RODIN

After Painting by the Late Robert McCameron
Courtesy Metropolitan Museum

Auguste Rodin died in Paris, Nov. 17 last. He had been ill for only a brief time with pneumonia.

Auguste Rodin was born in 1840 and first gained his livelihood by mixing clay in a studio. The first work he offered was rejected by the Academy of Fine Arts, but he pursued his end through the years, enduring cruel poverty, confident that he would have to be recognized some day. He supported himself for some time by making models for a Sevres factory and, finally, in 1877, his "Age of Bronze" suddenly brought him prominence. This famous work, after being accepted by the French Academy, astonished the jurors by its perfection of form and he was accused of having cast it from a living model. In 1887 he had the distinction of being told that he did not know the art of modeling, and that his statue of Balzac was just an evasion of difficulties.

His Many Works

This was executed for the Society of Men of Letters, and the criticism was so great that another sculptor, Falguière, was commissioned to execute a more conventional work in the following year. During this time, and for years after, Rodin devoted himself to the decorative composition, twenty feet high, "The Portal of Hell," for the Museum of Decorative Arts; "The Thinker," well known in America, being one of the figures. A bronze bust of "La France," by Rodin, was given by the people of France to the U. S. during the Lake Champlain tercentenary, and is mounted on a monument at Crown Point, N. Y. He executed busts for many Americans, and the largest single collection of his works outside of that which he gave last fall to France, is in the Metropolitan Museum, through a gift of Thomas Fortune Ryan; there being forty examples. In his later life he received many honors. Upon the death of Whistler, he succeeded as president of the International Society of Painters, Sculptors, and Gravers, and the degree of D. C. L. at Oxford University.

Rodin's personality as well as his work was generally misunderstood. His critics made him out a man of overbearing conceit, but his friends found him modest, confirmed in his conceptions of art, but not vindictive toward those who abused him. He was short and heavily built, with a massive head, deep set on his neck, and wore a patriarchal beard across his broad chest. His silvery hair was always carefully trimmed, and his blue eyes and deeply furrowed brow were capable of astonishing but always kindly expressions, and his conversation sparkled with aphorisms.

Government Gets Works

M. Rodin executed a deed of gift last year by which the French Government came into possession of all his works, the art objects he had acquired and the famous Hotel Biron, where they were displayed.

On January 29, 1917, Rodin married Rose Beurre, the companion who was once his model. As there was no coal to be had at Meudon, the guests for the ceremony carried coal instead of flowers. The marriage was due apparently to some mystical or religious impulse; and the woman who had served him through all the years since they had met in the village inn of Sevres kept by her father, was gratified by the ceremony that made her the sculptor's legal wife. She lived only three weeks after her marriage.

Rodin was reported dead Jan. 29th last, but it was revealed on the following day that it was his marriage to Rose Beurre that should have been chronicled and not his death.